

TESTIMONY OF ANTHONY CHATWIN, Ph.D., DIRECTOR OF MARINE AND COASTAL
CONSERVATION, NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
REGARDING THE FY 2011 BUDGET FOR
THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding FY 2011 funding for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Foundation). **The Foundation's FY 2011 funding request is fully authorized and each federally-appropriated dollar will be matched by a minimum of one non-federal dollar.** We respectfully request your approval of funding through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at the following levels:

- **\$ 3 million to help fishing communities in the transition to catch share programs - National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Operations, Research and Facilities appropriation; and**
- **\$ 2 million to foster coordination between NOAA, state, tribal, and local partners in comprehensive marine spatial planning - National Ocean Service's (NOS) Ocean and Coastal Management appropriation.**

Since its inception, the Foundation has leveraged \$500 million in federal funds into more than \$1.5 billion in on-the-ground and in-the-water conservation with less than 5% overhead to the federal government and fewer than 100 staff nationwide.

The Foundation was established by Congress in 1984 to foster public-private partnerships to conserve fish, wildlife, and their habitats. The Foundation is required by law to match each federally-appropriated dollar with a minimum of one non-federal dollar. We consistently exceed this requirement by leveraging federal funds at a 3:1 average ratio while building consensus and emphasizing accountability, measurable results, and sustainable conservation outcomes. FY 2011 funds will allow the Foundation to uphold our mission and expand our successful partnership with NOAA.

Sustainable Fisheries and Catch Shares

This \$3 million NOAA-NMFS request will support the Foundation's Fisheries Innovation Fund which is a grant program to assist fishing communities in the design and implementation of catch shares. This new initiative is a priority for the Foundation in FY 2011 and closely aligned with NOAA's budget priorities. **The purpose of the Fund is to partner with NOAA, private funders, and local communities to catalyze the development and implementation of limited access privilege programs ("LAPPs"), or catch shares, for the nation's marine fisheries.**

The Foundation will build on our successful grant-making partnerships in gear modification/exchange, bycatch reduction, and marine debris prevention to implement this grant-making and technical assistance program. Private partners have already committed to support the Fund and thereby leverage federal funds with their own matching contributions.

It is notable that the Administration's FY 2011 request includes \$54 million to initiate a National Catch Share Program. This is an important step and the Foundation is committed to helping NOAA implement this program, consistent with the Federal Catch Share Policy. As a neutral consensus builder with a proven track record of success, the Foundation has a unique role to play as a non-regulatory partner in NOAA's efforts to implement catch share programs.

The Draft Catch Share Policy states that NOAA will "encourage public-private partnerships and facilitate collaboration with state and local governments, regional economic development districts, public and private nonprofit organizations, and tribal entities to help communities address problems associated with long-term fishery and community sustainability." The Foundation is well-positioned to help NOAA implement this particular aspect of the policy by serving as a conduit to members of the fishing community in the design of catch share programs. **The Foundation's role will be to build trust and effective partnerships within local communities and, among other things, provide grants to improve their capacity to participate in the catch share design process.**

As an example, the Foundation recently made an investment in the State of Maryland to build a sustainable blue crab fishery in the Chesapeake Bay through development of catch shares. Our role was to help build trust between the regulators and the fishermen by promoting fishermen-to-fishermen learning opportunities about catch shares. In the Gulf of Mexico, we have provided grants to enable fishermen to meet regulatory requirements to convert their fishing gear, free of charge, to avoid bycatch. We operated similar gear conversion programs for New England lobstermen. The Fishing for Energy Program, established in 2008 with NOAA, Covanta Energy, and Schnitzer Steel, allows fishermen to dispose of derelict gear, free of charge, that Covanta converts to create energy. This successful partnership has benefited fishermen through collection and disposal of over 250 tons of derelict fishing gear from 18 ports in the United States.

The Foundation looks forward to working with NOAA as a funding partner in FY 2011 to develop catch share programs that are well-designed and thoughtfully prepared to foster healthy, profitable fisheries that are sustainable and beneficial to coastal communities.

Marine Spatial Planning and Marine Protected Areas

This \$2 million NOAA-NOS request will support the Foundation's Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) Fund which is a grant program focused on MPAs and the implementation of marine spatial planning conservation priorities. The Fund was established in 2009 in partnership with NOAA's MPA Center to provide grants that will foster collaboration at all levels of government to work together at regional, national and international levels to strengthen the management, protection, and conservation of MPAs.

MPA's play a critical role in the conservation of marine and coastal resources and span a range of habitats including open ocean, estuaries, and inter-tidal zones. There are a variety of MPA programs at the federal, state, tribal and local level that make up the new National System of MPAs. The Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force's Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning identifies MPAs as a primary tool for conservation of the marine environment. The Foundation's MPA Fund can deliver tangible results that contribute to the

marine spatial planning conservation goals of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force by enhancing coordination of federal, state, tribal, and local MPAs.

With FY 2011 funding, the Foundation will continue grant-making to support effective management, including strengthening of technical, scientific and enforcement capacity, and facilitating participation of stakeholders in planning efforts needed to ensure the success of the National System of MPAs. Specifically, the Fund will help to (1) enhance the protection of U.S. marine resources by providing new opportunities for regional and national cooperation, (2) support the national economy by helping to sustain fisheries and maintain healthy marine ecosystems for tourism and recreation businesses, and (3) promote public participation in MPA decision-making by improving access to public policy information.

The Administration's FY 2011 budget request recognizes the need for and importance of marine spatial planning and ocean governance. To that end, we respectfully ask for your support of the Foundation's MPAs Fund in FY 2011.

Conclusion

As the congressionally-chartered Foundation for NOAA, the Foundation is uniquely positioned to help the agency implement priority programs and leverage federal investments to support our shared conservation objectives. Direct appropriations through NOAA in FY 2011 will accelerate our joint effort to fully implement the Fisheries Innovation Fund and the Marine Protected Areas Fund. NOAA appropriations of \$5 million in FY 2011 would be matched at a minimum by an additional \$5 million from non-federal sources. As a trusted, neutral consensus builder, the Foundation stands ready to assist NOAA with implementation of these federal programs by catalyzing effective local partnerships to protect marine and coastal resources while ensuring continued economic benefits for local communities. Mr. Chairman, we greatly appreciate your continued support and hope the Subcommittee will approve funding for the Foundation in FY 2011.

Background on National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

As of FY 2009, the Foundation has awarded nearly 10,500 grants to more than 3,000 national and community-based organizations through successful partnerships with NOAA and other federal agencies including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service. This collaborative model brings together multiple federal agencies with state, tribal and local governments and private organizations to implement conservation strategies that directly benefit NOAA's goal to conserve coastal and ocean resources through ecosystem-based management.

The Foundation's grant-making involves a thorough internal and external review process. Peer reviews involve federal and state agencies, affected industry, non-profit organizations, and academics. Grants are also reviewed by the Foundation's issue experts and evaluation staff before being recommended to the Board of Directors for approval. In addition, according to our Congressional Charter, the Foundation provides a 30-day notification to the Members of Congress for the congressional district and state in which a grant will be funded, prior to making a funding decision.